

Date: 6 June 2014

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Media Release

Proactive 'Acute Diabetes Service' a success

A trial of a new way of caring for patients with diabetes has proved so successful it is to be rolled out to other parts of the RUH.

In 2013, the Acute Diabetes Service was launched at the RUH to improve the identification and management of diabetes amongst patients. Up to 20% of all patients treated at the RUH have diabetes and careful management of the condition is vital in aiding patient recovery. Patients with diabetes frequently stay longer in hospital – around two to three days longer on average – and are more likely to suffer complications during the course of their treatment.

Consultant Diabetologist Dr Marc Atkin is mindful of the challenges diabetes can present for a busy acute hospital, but has been pleased with the results delivered by the service since its introduction last year:

“We developed the Acute Diabetes Service because we recognised that there was much we could do to improve the quality and safety of our diabetes care; in particular, we recognized that a more proactive approach could help us achieve better outcomes for patients and help us to avoid unnecessary complications. We used a team of Diabetes Specialist Nurses to ensure diabetes was identified as quickly as possible following admission, and to design appropriate pathways of care that took into account the patient’s diabetes. There has also been a drive to educate all ward staff in good diabetes care and management.

“The results of the pilot clearly show that patients have been benefiting. By dramatically increasing the number of patients seen by a diabetes specialist within 24hrs of admission, we have been able to prevent a significant number of unnecessary admissions and improvement in discharge times. Staff knowledge of good diabetes care also improved as a result of dedicated training sessions. The project is now funded to run permanently in the Medical Assessment Unit, with a view to the scheme being rolled out to other parts of the hospital in the near future.”

With age- and obesity-related diabetes set to rise sharply in the future, it is hoped that the continuation of the Acute Diabetes Service will help the RUH to stay ahead of the game and provide appropriate care tailored to the community it serves.

Common symptoms of diabetes:

- Passing urine more often than usual, especially at night
- Increased thirst
- Extreme tiredness



- Unexplained weight loss
- Genital itching or regular episodes of thrush
- Slow healing of cuts and wounds
- Blurred vision

If you experience any of these symptoms, you should see your GP. Information and support on diabetes can be found on the NHS Choices website ([nhs.uk](https://www.nhs.uk)) and from national charity, Diabetes UK (diabetes.org.uk / 0345 123 2399).

Note for editors:

Diabetes Week, Diabetes UK's annual awareness and fundraising week, takes place next week from Sunday 8 to Saturday 14 June.

Ends